



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE
Silver Spring, MD 20910

JUL - 3 2006

**Final Environmental Impact Statement for the
Consolidated Highly Migratory Species
Fishery Management Plan Available**

The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) announces the availability of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) for the Final Consolidated Highly Migratory Species (HMS) Fishery Management Plan (FMP) for review. Publication and review of the FEIS precedes issuance of the final rule, which will establish regulatory changes associated with the Consolidated HMS FMP.

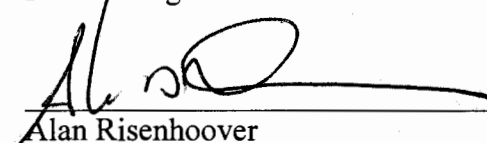
The FEIS describes a range of management measures that could impact fishermen and dealers for all HMS fisheries, including mandatory workshops for fishermen and dealers; complementary time/area closure and criteria for modifying and establishing time/area closures; addressing rebuilding and/or overfishing of northern albacore tuna, finetooth sharks, and Atlantic billfish; simplifying the management process of bluefin tuna; changing the fishing year for tunas, swordfish, and billfish back to a calendar year; authorizing additional fishing gears; and clarifying existing regulations. The notice of availability of the Draft HMS FMP published on August 19, 2005 (70 FR 48704), and the comment period closed on March 1, 2006 (October 18, 2005, 70 FR 52380).

The FEIS is available at <http://www.nmfs.noaa.gov/sfa/hms/> or by contacting Karyl Brewster-Geisz, Highly Migratory Species Management Division, National Marine Fisheries Service, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910, (301) 713-2347.

Comments or questions on this document submitted during the Agency's 30-day review period for the FEIS must be received by August 14, 2006. Comments received will be reviewed and considered for their impact on the issuance of the final rule. Written comments should be submitted by mail to Karyl Brewster-Geisz at the address above, faxed to (301) 713-1917, or submitted by e-mail to FinalHMSFMP@noaa.gov (include in the subject line the following identifier: FEIS HMS FMP). A copy of your comments should also be submitted by mail to the NOAA Office of Program Planning and Integration (PPI), SSMC3, Room 15603, 1315 East-West Highway, Silver Spring, MD 20910; by fax to 301-713-0585; or by e-mail to nepa.comments@noaa.gov.

The final rule is expected to publish soon after the review period on the FEIS. Regulations will become effective 30 days after the final rule is published, or as specified in the DATES section of the final rule.

This notice is a courtesy to Atlantic HMS interests to keep you informed about your fisheries. Official notice of Federal fishery actions is made through filing such notice with the Office of the Federal Register.


Alan Risenhoover
Acting Director, Office of Sustainable Fisheries



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